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## Dancing with the Devil

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## Dancing with the Devil

Her hair was three feet high and untamed. Her clothes were stylishly ripped in all the most indecent places. Her flawless body glistened with sweat and her mind was a jumbled maze, momentarily lost in Ecstasy. Loud dance music filled the air, and she howled with each note as her body gave way to the provocative dance. She was a wild animal, finally breaking free from captivity.

Anna had not always been this way. The year was 1995 when Anna was born. She was raised in a small village of Louisiana, so progressive modernism was lost far beyond to the outside walls. Farming and fishing were the town's most prominent jobs, but Anna's father was the town doctor. Anna's parents stressed the importance of education, but only the education of God's law. She was raised properly; strictly even, with morals. The morals instilled by her mother, father, and the church's community. Anna learned from a young age that children were to be seen and not heard, that presentation was everything, and that God's word was the final word. It was even expected that everyone in the community attend church every Sunday morning adorned in lavish dresses or pressed suits.

Anna had one best friend in the town and her name was Claire. Unlike Anna, Claire was an unruly child and loved creating mischief. While others thought Claire's behavior was sinful, Anna was attracted to her free spirited opposite, and they became inseparable by the time they were five. That is until grave tragedy struck.

*June 2, 2012*

"Anna, I'm going to run into town to get some last minute things for your birthday preparation. Please don't forget to do your chores!" Anna's mother called while running out the door.

"Okay, Mama!" Anna quickly attended to her first duty, which was dusting the house. She hummed while she worked with a cheerful smile plastered on her face. Anna began noticing her family's portraits in great detail as she lifted each one to dust. She smiled at how wholesome, proper, and loving her family was. She admired her parents and was thankful for the life she had received. Laundry was second on her chore list. Carefully, each garment was scrubbed by hand in a large pail and then hung on a line to dry. Anna continued this routine into the late afternoon, until it appeared as if a storm was rolling in. The day's gentle winds became howling and treacherous. An uneasy feeling washed over Anna and she shivered, not from cold, but from fear. Her hands were raw from both the heat and friction of washing each clothing item. She quickly hung up the last article of clothing, her mother's dress.

Once inside the phone began to ring.

"Hello," Anna answered.

"Anna! Hey! You should come out with James and I tonight, we found the good stuff!"

Anna recognized her best friend's voice immediately and rolled her eyes. James was Claire's new boyfriend and he was not from their neck of the woods. James was worldly and had a bit of a bad boy streak. Dating was not even technically

allowed until eighteen for most occupants of the town, including Anna. Even then her parents informed her that dating would only take place at Sunday's mass and family dinners. Also, the person that Anna would date would have to be approved by her parents first and foremost. Claire's parents had seemed to give up on keeping Claire in line. Claire would always make up stories of seeing the world and leaving this town. Anna knew that the "good stuff" Claire was referring to was a special kind of off limit adult drink that made one feel fuzzy in the head. Anna's father had told her that the good stuff was the drink of the devil. She had feared the beverage until Claire had forced her to try some last year. It was strong and reeked of something unfamiliar, but the more she drank the better it became. Soon her and Claire were laughing and dancing. Anna had felt so carefree and so perfect, that is until she ended up puking the whole way home, and waking up with a monumental migraine. Her father just frowned, and told her that thankfully her soul was pure and her body was rejecting the devil's offer. Claire did not have any after effects so Anna believed that her father's notion was probably right. Anna hadn't touched the stuff since.

"No thank you. I have one last chore left to do and mother should be home soon. She ran into town to collect some last minute things for the party tomorrow," Anna replied.

"Okay. Well, then I'll see you tomorrow!" Claire finished and hung up the phone. Anna went to finish her last chore, the dishes.

It was around eight at night when Anna was finishing up drying her last dish. The phone rang once again.

"Hello."

"Anna, you need to come down to the hospital right away. Your mother has been in a severe accident."

Anna suddenly dropped the dish she was holding as her father's receptionist's voice played upon her ears. As if in a tunnel, she heard the sound of glass shatter around her numb body. At last, she let the phone fall from her grip, scooped up her shoes, and ran towards the door. She didn't stop running until she reached the inside of the hospital.

### *Present*

Anna felt like a goddess, swaying to the music, and downing what she called the drink of the devil. She had not felt this good in a long time. Every cowboy had their eyes on her, but she was far from their southern belle. About an hour prior someone came up to her offering her a tiny pill. She asked what it was, but quickly decided she didn't want to know and swallowed the pill before she received a response. Today was one year since her mother's death and she did not want to remember that horrifying day. Ever since she learned the truth she fled from her hometown and deemed she would never return.

New York is where she ended up. Both a city that never sleeps and a city that is filled with diversity. Anna wanted change and indefinite occupancy. Plus no one would find her here, or so she thought. Underground raves were popular in the big cities and Anna grew to love them. Everyone was welcoming, self absorbed, and sometimes a little too friendly. At first Anna felt hidden in the sea of eccentric

costumes and makeup, but then she herself began to change to become noticed. She was naturally a pretty girl, but she never really seemed to notice her own beauty. Here in New York all that had changed. She began to dress in as little clothing as possible and experiment with vibrant makeup upon her once virgin canvases. She had reinvented herself, escaping the demons of her past, or at least that is what she had believed. As the song ended she opened her eyes and standing directly in front of her, Anna saw the devil herself.

*June 2, 2012*

"Where's my mother?! Is she okay," Anna panicked, trying to locate her mama.

"You better wait here." Her father's receptionist eyed her with both warning and sympathy.

"Where is my mother?!" Anna ignored the woman and rushed past her, heading into the ICU ward. The hospital was small, with only two rooms inside the ICU. She rushed to the window of the first room and peered in. She saw her father curled up in a ball sobbing and immediately saw the reason why. A woman wearing a hospital gown and mask was zipping up a large body bag over a woman's head. Anna recognized this woman as her mother.

Anna's knees gave way and she sunk to the floor in sobs. She did not understand. How could this be happening? She was nearly a perfect specimen of her parents and she did almost everything God asked of her. Suddenly her father was kneeling down beside her trying to explain the situation before her.

"Your mother was on her way home," Her father started.

She lost focus in his words and only comprehended bits and pieces.

"There were two young kids who had been drinking alcohol."

Alcohol; that was the first time she had heard her father use that term to describe the devil's drink.

"They failed to stop at the light and hit your mother head on." His voice grew weak at this point and he began to sob again. "You should go home Anna. The suspects are here getting checked out before their arrest and I do not want you to see them."

It was too late. Out of a room down the hall walked two disheveled teenagers. Their hair was knotted and dressed in filth. Their clothes had been worn and ripped. Anna could smell the mixture of alcohol and human musk reeking from their bodies. The worst part was, she recognized these teenagers. The pair was a girl and boy; Claire and James.

*Present*

Anna stood face to face with the girl who was once her best friend. To Anna, Claire was the devil in disguise. The music abruptly changed as Anna's eyes pierced into Claire's. Claire began to stalk towards Anna. Anna smirked as she offered out her hand and watched Claire's dumbfounded expression as her enemy accepted the invitation. Anna clasped Claire's hand in hers, threw her head back, and began to dance with the devil.